

# Town Meeting



BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

BROADCAST BY STATIONS OF THE AMERICAN BROADCASTING CO.

## Has Twentieth Century Civilization Improved Mankind?

*Moderator,* GEORGE V. DENNY, JR.

### *Speakers*

HARLOW SHAPLEY

J. HERBERT SMITH

LIN YUTANG

LEWIS BROWNE

*(See also page 12)*

### COMING

—July 10, 1947—

**Will the Taft-Hartley Law Improve Labor  
Relations in Industry?**

—July 17, 1947—

**Is Universal Military Training Necessary  
for Our Security?**





# CONTENTS



The account of the meeting reported in this Bulletin was transcribed from recordings made of the actual broadcast and represents the exact content of the meeting as nearly as such mechanism permits. The publishers and printer are not responsible for the statements of the speakers or the points of view presented.

## THE BROADCAST OF JULY 3:

### "Has Twentieth Century Civilization Improved Mankind?"

<i>Mr. DENNY</i> .....	3
<i>Dr. LIN YUTANG</i> .....	5
<i>Dr. SHAPLEY</i> .....	7
<i>Dr. SMITH</i> .....	9
<i>Dr. BROWNE</i> .....	11
THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN .....	12
QUESTIONS, PLEASE! .....	18

## THE BROADCAST OF JULY 10:

### "Will the Taft-Hartley Law Improve Labor Relations in Industry?"

## THE BROADCAST OF JULY 17:

### "Is Universal Military Training Necessary for Our Security?"

The Broadcast of July 3, 1947, originated from an American Airlines DC-6 flying over Hollywood, from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m., E.S.T., over the American Broadcasting Company network.

Town Meeting is published by The Town Hall, Inc., Town Meeting Publication Office: 400 S. Front St., Columbus 15, Ohio Send Subscriptions and single copy orders to Town Hall, 123 West 43rd St., New York 18, N.Y. Subscription price, \$4.50 a year, 10c a copy. Entered as second-class matter, May 9, 1942, at the Post Office at Columbus, Ohio, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

# Town Meeting



BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

GEORGE V. DENNY, JR., MODERATOR



JULY 3, 1947

VOL. 13, No. 10

## Has Twentieth Century Civilization Improved Mankind ?

### Announcer:

We welcome you tonight to a very special kind of Town Meeting, on a subject to which we know you would like the answer, "Has Twentieth Century Civilization Improved Mankind?"

In order to make our discussion more vivid for you, we are originating the program in two great American cities, or, I should say, in one, and over the other. Two of our speakers are in New York City, while the rest of us, including two speakers, an audience, and our moderator, are high above the City of Los Angeles.

We're in a spacious luxury airliner, the new DC-6, which flies regularly on the American Airlines between these two cities and other points throughout the country. These cities, this plane, and this great network of radio stations of the American Broad-

casting Company are symbols of this twentieth century civilization. And Los Angeles embraces Hollywood, the movie capital of the world, another symbol of the twentieth century — the century that introduced the Atomic Age.

Are we any happier, are we any better human beings in this twentieth century than our ancestors were one hundred, five hundred, or one thousand years ago? What do you think?

To conduct this meeting we're happy to welcome back to Town Meeting our founder and moderator, the President of Town Hall, New York, Mr. George V. Denny, Jr. Mr. Denny. (*Applause.*)

### Moderator Denny:

Good evening, neighbors. Well, I've had a wonderful twentieth century vacation on the ancient Mojave Desert, here in California, and I'm delighted to be back with you as we continue our Town



Meetings at this crucial time in the history of the world.

"Has Twentieth Century Civilization Improved Mankind?" All Town Meeting fans will wonder why we're doing this program over again which we did under the same title in February, 1939.

But listen, friends, the world has grown a thousand years during the past eight. We've fought a second world war, we've snatched the fire of the atom from heaven, or hell, and we're not quite sure which. Our leaders tell us that we're standing on the brink of a third world war, if we cannot learn to live together in peace.

We're grateful to the American Airlines for furnishing us this beautiful modern DC-6, symbol of the twentieth century, that spans the continent in nine and a half hours regularly. We're continually indebted to the engineering staff of the American Broadcasting Company and its 226 affiliated stations, that make such a broadcast as this possible.

In a few moments you'll hear Dr. Lin Yutang, famous Chinese philosopher, and Dr. Harlow Shapley, celebrated American scientist, speak to us from New York. Then, Reverend J. Herbert Smith, well-known Beverly Hills minister, and Dr. Lewis Browne, distinguished author and lecturer, will speak from this high plane, high over the City of Los Angeles.

All four speakers will be questioned by a representative audience along here with us.

This is another first for your Town Meeting. It's the first time a forum program has ever been presented from an airplane, and having two of our speakers from New York City further emphasizes the scientific progress of the miraculous twentieth century.

Well, I'm going to begin with the first question, gentlemen. How can we assure ourselves that the products of twentieth century civilization will not be used to destroy twentieth century civilization itself?

Why do we live in constant fear that a plane such as this one will be used to carry a weapon that will destroy a city of a million people? Why do we fear so deeply the possibility of the use of radio as a means of enslaving millions of people through and propaganda?

While science and industry are busy forging one world, why are our politicians dividing humanity into two worlds? If we have the brains to produce such marvels, why can we not enjoy the fruits of man's genius and live in peace?

Dr. Lin Yutang, your countrymen have contributed enormously to our understanding during the past four thousand years, and your own books, beginning with the highly successful *My Country* and *My People*, have been read

warm appreciation all over America. Will you tell us, sir, what are we to do with this twentieth century civilization in the light of the appalling facts as we know them today. Has this age of science improved mankind? We are eager, sir, for your counsel. Dr. Lin Yutang, speaking to us from New York. (*Applause.*)

**Dr. Lin:**

In regard to the question whether the twentieth century civilization has made mankind happier and wiser, my own answer is this: You can't have both.

In the present era, you can choose to be a happy idiot, or be a wise, but terribly worried man, that is, if you read the morning papers about what's going on in the United Nations, or at the Peace Conference in Paris this morning. No man can be happy when he feels he has to be responsible for the universe.

Now you know all the familiar answers to the question. On the one hand, there is progress of science, industry, medicine, sanitation, and a rising standard of living. On the other hand, people are suffering more from emotional conflicts. There is less home life, less religion, more social tension and unrest, more fear and hatred, and above all, the ever-present threat of war hanging over our heads.

This question of war overshadows all the other questions.

We live better, it is true, but we kill and may be killed faster.

Since we are dealing with the question of happiness, we must distinguish between individual happiness, and the happiness of society as a whole. Individual happiness is largely a matter of the proper functioning of the endocrine glands.

In any society and age, an individual can, through wisdom and discipline, always arrange to have a happy life. But no man is an island. His individual happiness also depends upon the type of society in which he lives, and our society is changing fast.

Now, because man is both body and spirit, he can be happy only when both his material and his spiritual needs are satisfied. In other words, he needs both groceries and freedom. Now, in modern civilization we are threatened with an increase of groceries and a decrease of freedom.

Human civilization may be classified into four classes: (1) groceries with freedom, that is the American civilization; (2) freedom without groceries, that is generally and relatively true of the industrially backward nations; (3) groceries without freedom, that is true of white totalitarianism under Hitler; and (4) no groceries and no freedom, that is, Red totalitarianism under Stalin. There is every evidence that groceries are increasing in Russia, and that, given ten



or twenty years of peace, the Russian people will move into Class 3 and have groceries without freedom.

Now because of the social and national tensions, modern mankind as a whole is decidedly unhappy under the threat of wars, which would wipe out all benefits from scientific progress.

If we think of America alone, where man has both groceries and freedom, civilization is moving straight toward its desired goal. If we only had peace, and the assurance of peace, when man's energies can be liberated for industrial production, scientific discoveries, and artistic creations, the possibilities of increasing human happiness are enormous; but Europe and Asia are also parts of the twentieth century. There, men are neither free from want nor free from fear. Therefore, another war is threatening to engulf us all. And the next war may destroy this civilization.

Therefore, the question is not whether this civilization has improved mankind, but whether there will be a mankind to improve after the next atomic war. We cannot be too happy if, in the next war, we are all driven to live in underground caves to avoid atomic bombs, although the caves may be perfectly air-conditioned and disinfected with ultraviolet rays. The very thought of it makes me unhappy.

What must we do? We must

concentrate the highest human intelligence available at present to deal with the problem of world peace. No harm can come if we ban all scientific progress for five years, until we know what we can make of what we have got. Scientific discoveries can wait. The problem of peace cannot.

The United States spent two billion dollars and mobilized all scientific talent of the country to develop the atom bomb. It can well spend a hundredth part of that money, or twenty million dollars, to be raised by public subscription or private endowment, to mobilize ten or twelve of the best scientists of the world to study the question of peace. Such a congress of scientists will be a private but permanent institution, and it will have for its proper subject of study the whole problem of the mechanism of modern civilization for the specific purpose of achieving world peace.

We can have men like Einstein, Compton, Millikan of America, and, for instance, Haldane and Huxley of England; and thinkers like Thomas Mann and T. S. Eliot, and some clergymen may be included. They will have no official power—no power except the weight of their opinion. We need such a concentration of human intelligence, and these men will wield a tremendous influence over this generation only by the power of their ideas.

I like this idea, because I am against official organizations, and because I distrust all politicians, and have implicit trust in scientists. (*Applause.*)

**Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Dr. Lin Yutang.

And, now, Dr. Harlow Shapley, you were with us when we discussed this subject eight years ago, and you talked to us then about galaxy years equal to two hundred million earth years; but we impatient inhabitants of the twentieth century want to know what you scientists mean by giving us atomic power when we were so ill-prepared for it.

Do you want us to think that we are ready for such dangerous toys as atomic bombs and radio-guided missiles of mass destruction? Are you as optimistic today as you were in February, 1939? We seek your counsel as one of the leaders and outstanding spokesmen for the men of science who have contributed so richly to the building of this magic century.

May we hear now from Dr. Harlow Shapley, director of the Harvard Observatory of Harvard University, speaking from New York. Dr. Shapley. (*Applause.*)

**Dr. Shapley:**

You ask if mankind has improved in the past fifty years. The answer is, Yes! Mr. Denny. And may I go home now? Or, do you want me to fill in time by ex-

plaining, and lay myself open to criticism and contradictions?

Yes, not only mankind has improved, but cowkind, and pigkind, and turnips, and apples. Yes, apples have improved, notwithstanding the faulty memories of some of you old timers.

But apples must be cared for in order to stay improved; also, mankind. The better we both get—apples and man—the more susceptible we become to blight. In all good apple country we must fumigate and sprinkle and spray. In our best human society we must exhort, and incite, and educate. If we do not, the bugs will get us—both of us.

Apparently one of the penalties of being improved and highly cultivated is increased susceptibility. Your healthy, rosy cheeks—you and the apples—your goodness, from tender skin throughout the whole interior, needs more conscientious care now than heretofore. Apparently, times have changed. We did not need to protect grandfather from "isms" so much, nor his apples from blight.

Yes, mankind has improved. But this statement does not necessarily hold if you are speaking of men and women in some parts of Poland, or if you define improvement in some special way. Dr. Smith doubtless will tell you that man could stand some still further improvements.

I'm willing to grant that changes



for the better have not occurred in the character of political leaders, at least in some parts of the world; and in religious devotions, no improvement, in some parts of the world.

No, there have been, I admit, stagnations and recessions. It's in the average well-being of all people that steady improvement has come about, interrupted temporarily by a couple of world wars and some depressions. And there are good reasons why we should expect further improvement the world over, provided we do not get to fighting again and lose entirely the art of humanity. Among the good reasons for this hopeful human vista are the new resources which we have for the betterment of life.

Let me name some of the old resources that have helped get mankind into the somewhat civilized state in which we now find him. The instinctive combativeness of man has stood him in good stead—the thrill of competing and contesting is one of those nice inheritances from the jungle, like love, and our antipathy to snakes. Another resource, in ages past, has been the abundant mineral and vegetable supply that a bountiful planet has provided.

Perhaps the most useful resource up to now has been our confidence that the mind of man has indefinite possibilities for the higher decencies, providing we

can control or appease sufficient his emotions and hungers, and providing we remember that improved apples and mankind both recede if not taken care properly.

We've got to spray, both with bug killers and with education, for world civilization. In other words, ambition, energy, confidence in the human mind, and natural resources have got us nicely to the beginning of this century without too many disgraces and too many scars. Now we have additional resources, for instance, a world consciousness, and a widespread social sensitiveness — that is, we might say that we have a will to devotion to the whole of humanity. Our charities are less localized. The airplane, motion picture, and especially the radio have brought about this planetary conscience and planetary concern.

Also, we have now a high degree of technical training, so that we tackle with confidence, and with reason, and with arithmetic such problems as soil erosion, poliomyelitis, static, and religious minorities.

In summary, therefore, not only has science, and the increasing knowledge of social living, improved mankind during the first half of the twentieth century, but further improvement is inevitable if we do not make fools of ourselves by mishandling the tools

I, too, worry, by the way, about



the tools used at Paris today and yesterday. Were they bludgeons, stilettos, or gas?

We have had rich resources in the past. Science of all sorts, from electronics to psychology, is supplying us with additional resources for the good life that even a somber philosopher, Dr. Lin, cannot moan away, but we have got to watch out for the blights that beset the most advanced creations, whether they be creations of the human spirit or of the animal body; whether they be men or apples. We must fight off the pestiferous and pessimistic tendencies.

Let us maintain the advances. Let us watch for error and rust. Let us fight the blights. Let us spray. (*Applause.*)

#### **Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Dr. Shapley. Now, let's turn to the speakers in our plane, flying high over Hollywood, the glamorous city whose moral life is constantly in the brilliant glare of the floodlights of publicity. We have with us tonight the rector of All Saints Episcopal Church in Beverly Hills, a residential city adjoining Hollywood in greater Los Angeles, who is in a position to give us his firsthand impression of tonight's question, "Has Twentieth Century Civilization Improved Mankind?"

What do you say, Reverend J. Herbert Smith? (*Applause.*)

#### **Dr. Smith:**

Dr. Shapley, your gracious optimism makes me feel somewhat like the Pullman porter who took on a passenger at Rochester. The man put a five-dollar tip in his hand with emphatic instructions to get him off at Albany in the middle of the night. The next morning, the fellow awoke in New York. Angry and frustrated, he called the porter and conductor and began to berate them both for their carelessness.

After he departed, the conductor said to the porter, "My! Did you ever see anyone so angry in all your life?"

"Yes, siree," replied the porter, "that fellow I put off the train in Albany last night." (*Laughter.*)

I want to agree with you, Dr. Shapley, and you, Lewis Browne, but facts will not permit me. No one can possibly deny that the twentieth century has blessed us scientifically. But technology has so far outdistanced our moral and spiritual growth that our civilization is imperiled. Our age is scientifically adult, but dressed in spiritual short pants.

Perhaps the late G.\*K. Chesterton described our embarrassing plight by a remark he made to a friend with whom he had been discussing the invention of the radio. "What a tragedy," said Chesterton, "that it was invented at a time when man had so little to say."

We must not lull ourselves into a sense of false security because our century has multiplied gadgets, has increased its speed, has made living softer. We are not happier. We have less security and peace of mind, and our human relationships seem to be more complicated.

The splitting of the atom ushered in a new age. But so far, it has done more to split men farther apart than to draw them closer together. I notice that you, Dr. Shapley, say that future world improvement will depend on our not getting involved in another war. Dr. Shapley, don't you think we are getting pretty close to such?

Two things have happened during the last week which would make me wonder. A few days ago, Dr. Urey and Dr. Einstein, speaking for a group of distinguished scientists, said that by 1955 Russia would have a stockpile of atomic weapons, and that after that, war might be a possibility any day. They made a strong plea for a world government and for international control of the atom.

Second, yesterday the Paris Conference ended in failure. Instead of dreaming about and working for one world, it looks as if we shall have to be realistic and face the fact that we are doomed to live in two. The big "if" which blocks our way to

world unity and co-operation the possibility of another war.

War means that people have not found a way to reconcile differences. This breakdown begins in the lives of individuals. Nowhere is this failure in relationships more graphic than in the deterioration of family life in America and in the shocking growth in the number of juvenile delinquents.

This tragic defeat in human relationship, beginning in the home, is magnified in our society in the form of racial antagonism, industrial strife, and rivalry between nations and their ideologies. The personal failure, raised to the national power in social problems, multiplies intrigue, magnifies lust for power, makes for greater hypocrisy and increases fear.

If we are to see brighter days I believe with you, Dr. Lin Yutang, that you are right in saying that scientists must do their part to close the dangerous gap between our scientific accomplishments and our moral and spiritual potentialities. But this is a job for science and religion.

There are already encouraging signs that some of the leading scientists are losing confidence in science as a sufficient guide to life and they are now turning to God. Dr. Arthur H. Compton says that "There can be no conflict between science and religion." Einstein says the other day, "Our defense against

the atom bomb is not in armaments, nor in science, nor in going underground. Our defense is in law and order."

I am not one of those who think that it is too late to save our world. I do think, however, that time is rapidly running out on the basis on which we are now living.

I sincerely believe that the problems confronting us today could be faced and solved if America would undergo a genuine religious revolution. But religious revolutions begin in the hearts of individuals who are sincerely and wholeheartedly committed to faith in God and His plan for a united world.

The time has come for many of us so-called Christian Americans to forsake our pagan, selfish, and materialistic ways. A moral imperative and a divine authority, God Himself, must impel more of us to relate our Christian ideals to our own personal needs and to the needs of our world. Only on this basis can we continue to put the common good above that of any individual.

This revolution, conceived in the mind of God, begins in the hearts of men, and ends by transforming the world. Let religion and science join hands in this enterprise and reverse the moral trend. This is a challenge that faces you and me as American citizens. If we accept it, then the twentieth century will be remem-

bered not only as the beginning of the Atomic Age but also as the dawn of a new and more glorious era. (*Applause.*)

#### **Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Dr. Smith. Now we have saved our optimistic speaker until last. He is Dr. Lewis Browne, famous author, lecturer, and philosopher, whose books have, like Dr. Lin's, been widely read throughout this country. We shall want to hear from this highly provocative man of letters, who lives at the Uplifters Club here in sunny California, except for the brief rainy season when he goes to New York to lecture.

Now, our old friend, Dr. Lewis Browne. (*Applause.*)

#### **Dr. Browne:**

Thank you, Mr. Denny. The twentieth century is 47 years old—in other words, at the very most, one ten-thousandth of the total history of mankind.

Asking, therefore, whether it has improved mankind is a little like asking whether the breeze that sprang up half an hour ago has improved the climate of California. Incidentally, as an old Californian, you couldn't improve the climate.

But the grave question has been asked, and if an answer must be given, I feel very strongly that the answer should be, yes; mankind has been improved.

You asked, Mr. Denny, a mo-



ment ago why we live in dread of war and all these other things now. It isn't the fault of the twentieth century. It's the fault of all the other centuries before the twentieth that we drag around with us now.

Now in this twentieth century for the first time in history, there is a determined and universal revulsion against war. Only the madmen romanticize it now, and that's a sign of improvement.

For the first time in history

## THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

**HARLOW SHAPLEY**—A foremost scientist and lecturer, Dr. Shapley is director of the Harvard Observatory and the president of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

A native of Nashville, Missouri, he is the recipient of numerous degrees: A.B., A.M., and LL.D., from University of Missouri; Ph.D., Princeton, and Sc.D. from same university; Sc.D. from University of Pittsburgh, University of Pennsylvania, Harvard University, University of Toronto, and Brown University; LL.D., Oglethorpe University; Litt. D. from Bates College; and Doctor honoris causa, University of Michocan, Mexico.

Dr. Shapley was astronomer at Mt. Wilson Observatory, California, from 1914-21, and has been director of Harvard Observatory since 1921. For his valuable contributions in scientific research, he has received numerous medals and prizes from noted societies of arts and sciences both in this country and abroad.

Dr. Shapley has been devoting a large part of his time to the broader problems of the organization of science and the preservation of our civilization throughout the world.

**LEWIS BROWNE**—Author, lecturer, philosopher, world traveler, Dr. Browne was born in London, England, and came to the United States in 1912. After receiving degrees from the University of Cincinnati and the Hebrew Union College, Rabbinical Seminary, Dr. Browne took postgraduate work at Yale University and then became rabbi of Temple Israel, Waterbury, Connecticut. In 1926, he resigned his rabbinate at the Free Synagogue of Newark, New Jersey, to devote his time to writing and lecturing.

During his distinguished platform career, Dr. Browne has delivered nearly 2,000 public lectures, lecturing in Japan, China, India, Palestine, Hawaii, Alaska, Canada, England, France, and many other countries. He has been visiting professor at Pennsylvania State College, the University of California at Los Angeles, and the University of Hawaii, and was extension di-

vision lecturer at Columbia University. He served as civilian lecturer on orientation for the War Department in 1942-45.

Outstanding among his publications are *This Believing World* (1926); *Since Calvary* (1931); *Oh, Say, Can You See?* (1937); *Something Went Wrong* (1942); *See What I Mean?* (1943); and *The Wisdom of Israel* (1945). His latest work is *The World's Great Scriptures*—an anthology of 90 religious texts with historical introductions and interpretative comments.

**J. HERBERT SMITH**—Reverend J. Herbert Smith is rector of All Saints Church, Beverly Hills, California. A graduate of the University of Chicago and the General Theological Seminary, New York, he was on the staff of the Calvary Episcopal Church in New York for 13 years. Dr. Smith is a consultant to motion picture studios in preparation of movie scripts. He was technical director of such films as "The Flame," "Life with Father," and "The Bishop's Wife."

**LIN YUTANG**—Born in Changchow, Fukien, China, Lin Yutang attended Christian schools in his native land, learning English and Western subjects. After his graduation from St. John's University in Shanghai in 1916, he taught at Tsing Hua College in Peking.

He set out for graduate study in the West, was married, and came to Harvard for a year from 1919-20. From there he went on to Jena and Leipzig universities in Germany, returning in 1923 to teach English in Peking National University. He left the academic world in 1927 to become secretary to the Foreign Ministry of the Hankow Government.

Through his writings, Dr. Lin has, perhaps, done more than any other person to make China intelligible to the Western mind. Some of his books, in English, include *My Country and My People* (1935); *The Importance of Living* (1937); *A Leaf in the Storm* (1941); *The Wisdom of China and India* (1942); *Between Tears and Laughter* (1943); and *The Vigil of a Nation* (1945).

here is widespread aversion to cruelty. Everything that happened in the German concentration camps and in the Japanese prison camps would have been taken for granted—it would have been accepted as normal—in former times. Today they arouse unspeakable horror, and that's a sign of improvement. The shocking thing is not that the atrocities occurred; the amazing thing is that we were not shocked by them.

At the moment we, in this country, are spending 10 per cent of the total national income on what used to be considered charitable activities, philanthropy, brotherly activities. More and more in this twentieth century we have the feeling that all men are our brothers, or at least our brothers-in-law, and that's some improvement.

We show more concern for the halt, for the lame, for the blind, for the aged than ever before in all of history. We are kinder to animals. We are more tolerant with eccentrics, more comradely with minorities than ever before.

Have you improved? Ask yourself. Aren't you kinder to the weak than your grandfather was? Aren't you more tolerant to people who have a different coloring than yours? Who happen to have a different outlook on life than you have?

Of course, you have changed, and you have changed for the bet-

ter. If you haven't, you haven't really lived in the twentieth century. You have lived behind the times.

In this twentieth century, we have enfranchised the whole half of the adult population. We, at last, have woman suffrage, and that, too, it seems—to me, at least—is a sign of improvement.

Yes, brother, I can hear you snicker! You say, "What have females done with their votes?" Well, what have the males done with theirs? If you feel it is no improvement to give women the vote, then you must admit it was no improvement to give men the vote.

Perhaps you do make that admission—but would you be willing to surrender your right to vote? The achievement of woman suffrage — a twentieth century achievement—is like the acquisition of a pocket handkerchief. It won't necessarily keep your nose clean—but it certainly could help, couldn't it?

In this twentieth century for the first time we have begun to release the colonial populations of the world. Consider what has happened in the Philippines, and the East Indies, the whole sub-continent of India, and all of China. All this, in our day, is happening. These peoples—the millions, almost billions—were held in vassalage, or worse, until these last

few years. Now they are becoming independent. See how imperialism has crumbled in this twentieth century, releasing millions, hundreds of millions, of colored people from the white man's yoke. That may seem no improvement to you, if you happen to be a white man. But if you're a white man, you're in the minority—and we are thinking of the majority at the moment.

And here we come to the crux of the question. For a minority, it cannot be denied that the twentieth century has been a disaster. It has ruined the kings and the lords and all the rest who enjoyed privileges, but for the rest it has meant at least the hope of triumph.

For a few, it has been possible to groan for the merry old days, but the rest of us should remember that the word "merry" originally meant "short," and those merry old days were short old days—short of food and short of clothing, short of roads to free the body, and short of schools to free the mind.

One final word. At the moment and on the surface, this twentieth century may seem pretty awful when compared with, let us say, the nineteenth century. But an adolescent, with a pimply face, and a strident voice, and a hobbled-hoy bobby-sox manner, looks even worse when compared with a sweet, gurgling, pink-faced baby. Nevertheless, we know that an

adolescent is somehow an improvement over the baby.

Let's realize that the same is true of this world we live in. Dr. Smith said a moment ago that we are scientifically adult but spiritually in short pants. But it's better to be in short pants than in diapers, and that's what we were until this last minute or so.

This world of ours may look so awful in part because a new gland has begun to function in it rampantly—the gland of industrialism which might be called the gland of the free, and the hormone of the brave. Don't groan because mankind is still so savage. Rejoice because in this twentieth century at last it has begun to see that it should be civilized. (*Applause*)

### **Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Lewis Browne. I wouldn't be surprised if Walter Winchell and a few other columnists took you up on that last wisecrack of yours. It was very smart indeed.

Now, gentlemen, let's imagine that Dr. Shapley and Dr. Lin are here with us in this plane, high over the City of Los Angeles.

You know, by this miracle of radio it would be just as easy for us to have Marshal Stalin and Tito join us by this same process if it were not for certain ideological proprieties.

Now, let's see if we can't carry on a brief discussion before taking



the questions from this audience, which is literally, if not figuratively, up in the air. Dr. Lin, have you a question for either of our speakers?

**Dr. Lin:** Oh, Mr. Denny, first I will tell you that I am very unhappy under the earphones.

I am glad there is enough difference of opinion, but I have one question that I would like to direct to Dr. Shapley. Dr. Shapley, if the next war, as the atomic scientists have warned us, is going to be an atomic war, and if, as is unavoidable, mankind is going to be wiped out, who will eat the apples?

**Dr. Shapley:** Who will eat the apples? (*Laughter.*) Well, Dr. Lin, I'll tell you about the apples, who is the eater of them. There are people who have been civilized, say, fifty million years. They are the ants. They'll eat the apples, probably.

**Mr. Denny:** Oh, boy! I think here you have your answer, Dr. Lin. Lewis Browne, have you a question for any of the speakers in New York?

**Dr. Browne:** I would like to ask Dr. Smith this question: He says that we've got to use religion in combination with science. A good idea, of course; but I should like to ask this question. There was a time when religion had all in its hands. They were ages of faith. Would he maintain that in those

days we had a superior civilization to those which science, by itself, has been trying to create?

**Mr. Denny:** All right, Dr. Smith.

**Dr. Smith:** I would say that there was an imbalance in those days, as there is at this moment. There was a lag in scientific knowledge and understanding, and I think, today, science has gone so far ahead of religion that it still is imbalanced.

**Mr. Denny:** Dr. Shapley, have you any questions for our speakers here in the plane?

**Dr. Shapley:** Well, this is for any philosopher, whether in the plane or not. I once asked a philosopher for a definition of nonsense. He said it was what other philosophers talk. (*Laughter.*)

I want to refer to Dr. Lin's statement that no harm can come if we ban all scientific progress for five years. Now, that is some other man's philosophy, I would say.

Would Dr. Lin think that the science of psychiatry of individuals and of nations—that that should be banned and not used in these desperate days when we are seeking for peace?

**Mr. Denny:** Dr. Lin?

**Dr. Lin:** In answer to that I can easily say that psychiatrists in modern days have many, many

more patients than in the nineteenth century.

**Mr. Denny:** Lewis Browne wants to comment.

**Dr. Browne:** Yes, but remember the psychiatrist has more patients in the twentieth century than in the nineteenth because nowadays people are recognized as needing psychiatric aid, who, in the past, were merely considered a little eccentric and weird. We used to, when they became very bad, put them in the attic and lock them up there.

Nowadays we are more civilized. We bring them out to some clinic. We haven't got more mad people. We've got more sane people who recognize that madness exists.

**Mr. Denny:** But, gentlemen, let's wrestle with that question that Dr. Shapley threw back at Dr. Lin just a moment ago. He said that Dr. Lin proposed that we ban scientific progress for five years. Without a world government, Dr. Lin, how do you propose banning scientific progress? Do you think the Russians and the totalitarian countries are going to agree to ban scientific progress?

**Dr. Lin:** I must make that question clear. What I said was, scientific discoveries can wait, but the problem of peace cannot; and no harm will come if we ban scientific progress for five years, until we know what to make of what we have already got. I mean that all scientific intelligence

should be devoted to the tackling of the problem of peace.

**Mr. Denny:** Dr. Browne?

**Dr. Browne:** There is one problem there, Dr. Lin. Who is going to do the banning? You remind me of the mother who sees an adolescent child growing up and says, "I wish that girl would stop growing for five years. She's giving me embarrassed—she's showing off my age."

**Dr. Lin:** I can answer that question easily enough, but I have a more important question to ask Dr. Browne. I protest against Dr. Browne's insinuation that the nineteenth century man was wearing diapers, while the twentieth century man is wearing short pants. Materially that is true, spiritually that is decidedly not.

We speak of Mid-Victorianism as old-fashioned. Remember, Mid-Victorian had a valid body of beliefs. The modern man is unhappy; he is confused because he has lost the good, old Victorian beliefs in certain things about the universe, about human life, the purpose of life, and about social decencies. That we have lost them. We certainly cannot say that the nineteenth century was a pin-faced baby, while we are adolescents. I think that is not correct historically.

**Dr. Shapley:** I think, Dr. Lin, that you have a little more to defend about stopping the progress of science at this time not only for

the standpoint of the use of psychiatry in curing us of our difficulties, but do you think that the one million people who are now suffering from cancer think we could now have science banned at this time?

**Dr. Lin:** No, the question is—you don't understand what I said. I said, the important thing is to concentrate human intelligence on the problem of peace. The progress of science cannot be banned because it cannot be done; but even if it could be done, no great harm would come about.

**Mr. Denny:** All right. Thank you, Dr. Lin. I'm afraid we can't quite settle that problem here today, and there are a great many people here in the plane eager to ask questions of all four of the speakers. Now, while we get ready for our question period, I am sure that you and the listeners will be interested in the following message.

**Announcer:** You are listening to America's Town Meeting of the Air, brought to you by Town Hall and the American Broadcasting Company, originating tonight in two great American cities.

Our audience and two of the speakers, Rev. J. Herbert Smith and Dr. Lewis Browne, are in a new American Airlines luxury airliner, a DC-6, flying over the City of Los Angeles. Two of our

speakers, Dr. Harlow Shapley and Dr. Lin Yutang, are in New York. We are discussing the subject, "Has Twentieth Century Civilization Improved Mankind?"

This entire program including the questions and answers to follow is printed in our Town Meeting Bulletin each week for your convenience. You may secure your copy of tonight's broadcast by writing to Town Hall, New York 18, New York, enclosing ten cents to cover the cost of printing and mailing. If you would like to receive this bulletin regularly each week for 11 weeks, enclose \$1; for six months, \$2.35; for one year, \$4.50. Remember the address, Town Hall, New York 18, New York, and allow at least two weeks for delivery.

And don't forget your Town Meeting will be heard all summer. It is now on a coast-to-coast tour. Programs will originate in Colorado, Utah, Washington, Canada, California, New Mexico, Texas, and Missouri, before we return to Town Hall, New York, next October. And if we don't get to your neighborhood, remember you can participate in your Town Meeting by letting us know the subject you would most like to hear discussed. Just drop us a line. The address is Town Hall, New York 18, New York.

Now for our question period, we return you to Mr. Denny.



# QUESTIONS, PLEASE!

*Mr. Denny:* And now we are ready for our questions from the audience up here in this beautiful DC-6. And I see a beautiful young lady, dressed in a lovely blue dress. Your name, please?

*Lady:* Jean Sarasy, New York City. I have a question for Dr. Browne. You said, and we know, that women have gained the vote and almost complete emancipation in this twentieth century. Yet the thing that bothers me, Dr. Browne, is that we have more divorces, and more delinquencies and more idleness among women than ever before. And women represent more than half the population. Do you really think twentieth century civilization has improved woman-kind?

*Dr. Browne:* Yes, I certainly do. First of all, I think one fact is incorrect. There is not more idleness among women, now. The latest statistics I have seen, for this country, at least, show that more women are employed than ever before in history.

As for the increase of divorces, true; but that may be a sign of improvement. The trouble was in the past that we believed that since marriages were made in heaven they had to be lived in hell. But now we can get a divorce and can go to Reno, or purgatory. And that, after all, is some, perhaps, improvement. As to delinquency,

it may seem to have increased, but actually we consider these things delinquent that in the past would have been taken for normal. Have you something to say to that, Dr. Smith?

*Dr. Smith:* I'd like to answer that question. I, of course, do not want to impair my Hooper rating by contending that the women are responsible for the downfall of mankind, or twentieth century civilization. I certainly would not go along with Dr. Browne and say that they have improved as much as he contends. I am much concerned about the disintegration of American home life, and when I read my history and see other civilizations, almost as great as our own, that have gone down to drain, I wonder if America has not better watch out and see whether something ought to be done to unify and strengthen our family life in America.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. Dr. Lin, do you or Dr. Shapley have a comment to make?

*Dr. Lin:* All I can say is that it is very fine for Dr. Browne to philosophize about women who are divorced, but I would like to ask the women who are divorced themselves, whether they are happy or not about it?

*Mr. Denny:* Well, we can't give the answer to that this afternoon.

so we'll take the next question from the gentleman right here.

*Man:* Mr. King from Santa Monica. I want to address my question to Dr. Lin Yutang. You suggested that for modern man to attain happiness, he must have very stable beliefs. You have also said that some of these beliefs may be wrong, but it is still necessary for him to have them. Now my question is, is it not necessary for us Americans to change some of these ideas which we have that are very stable and fixed but yet may be wrong in terms of social science?

*Mr. Denny:* Dr. Lin?

*Dr. Lin:* When I say that man must have a stable body of beliefs, I mean, not ideas about particular questions, but general ideas about the purpose of life, about the existence of God, about society, about the home. Now you take the man of the Middle Ages. He may be quite wrong about geography, about the roundness of the earth, about planetary movements. He did have some fairly correct ideas about human relationships.

Now we are losing that body of valid beliefs—a body of valid beliefs that individuals may protest against, may not like or agree with, but, nevertheless, a solid body of valid beliefs that are generally current, and it is only when society accepts a general body of valid beliefs that the individual can be

happy, because otherwise he doesn't know what he is living for.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Dr. Lin. Dr. Browne has a comment on that.

*Dr. Browne:* I'm worried, Dr. Lin, about these people who have these stable beliefs. Even if they're wrong, they're good, you say. Aren't you confusing happiness with just contentment?—the vegetable contentment that animals can have and vegetation can have? There was once stable beliefs, you say, and you say people were happy. The stable beliefs concerning human relationships were these: You stood in terror, in dread, of your lord and master. You beat your wife if you had a wife, and if you didn't have a wife, you stole one. Your attitude toward your children was that they were to serve you like slaves, until they ran away because they threatened to kill you. Was that a good civilization in which man could be happy?

*Mr. Denny:* Dr. Lin.

*Dr. Lin:* I think there's a misunderstanding. I did not say that it was better to have wrong beliefs than to have right beliefs. I did not say that we should not have progressive ideas, but I would certainly say man is happier to have wrong but firm beliefs, than to have no beliefs at all; and that is the danger of modern civilization. We are going to have no beliefs about God, about the purpose of

life, about the universe. We have no philosophy whatsoever.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Dr. Lin. Now, here's a question for Dr. Shapley from a young man who is a student and in the Navy, and he's a very thoughtful young man. Jimmy McFarland. What's your question, please?

*Mr. McFarland:* Dr. Shapley, people have squandered money and time lavishly in the field of science and neglected human relations. Don't you think that this is responsible in large measure for our present failure in human relations?

*Dr. Shapley:* I deny first of all that the money has been squandered that has gone into science, but I do believe that we have a strong physics and a weak sociology. I think our greatest need at the present time is further study of human relations and especially of social organizations. Yes, I agree with you on that in general.

*Mr. Denny:* All right, thank you, Dr. Shapley. Now we want to hear from the moving picture world, and here's a man who represents the entertainment moving-picture world. He's very familiar to all screen lovers and to music lovers—Buddy Rogers, the husband of Mary Pickford, and he's a co-producer of a new picture coming out, "Sleep, My Love." Mr. Rogers has a question here for one of the speakers.

*Mr. Rogers:* Yes, Mr. Denny. I have a question for Dr. Browne. Dr. Browne, isn't it true that twentieth century scientific advancement has only increased the intensity of nationalism rather than furthering the cause of internationalism?

*Mr. Denny:* Dr. Browne.

*Dr. Browne:* No, I don't think it has increased the intensity of nationalism. It may have increased the capacity of people to do damage with nineteenth century nationalist ideas. Actually, twentieth century civilization is making people more and more conscious of the fact that they are all people in one world. The difficulty is that we still have too many ideas from earlier centuries, and these ideas are being instrumented with the things that we've created in the twentieth century.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Dr. Browne. Now, here are three questions for Dr. Shapley. I'll talk one here from Emil Corwin of the radio world.

*Mr. Corwin:* Dr. Shapley, don't you think it's poor economy on the part of our lawmakers to garble on such measures as the health bill, reclamation, and soil conservation, and housing, when they could do so much to benefit our civilization? If so, what can we do to educate these lawmakers?

*Dr. Shapley:* Write to your congressman. Keep irritating them.



because definitely things are going too slow with respect to the social legislations we have before us. For instance, the National Science Foundation, which is going to be used by me to emphasize that the preceding question was off the beam completely, because modern science has increased internationalism. There are more than 500 different organizations that are international or inter-American at the present time. They show that science goes over the border. There is no trouble about agreeing about scientific laws. I think, in general, that we want to say that science is working definitely for internationalism. In regard to these laws again, I want to mention not only the health bills, and the housing bills, but especially the national science foundations, and the bills for international and cultural relations. We've cut down our appropriations very seriously. People want to know about what's going on in America, so you ask what to do. Write to your congressman; write to your senator.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Dr. Shapley. Now, here's a question for Dr. Smith.

*Man:* My name is Stanford Bissell of Los Angeles. Dr. Smith, you advocate a religious revolution, and point out that our civilization requires a change of heart. Doesn't the heart work best on a full stomach? And does religion offer more groceries?

*Dr. Smith:* Not necessarily, except that when people are motivated by a religious impulse, their horizons are widened and they are more widely concerned and deeply concerned about those who are in need. And there is an impulse to share more deeply and more widely than is due evident in certain cases today. I certainly believe that religion is a great motivation to make people share and to make them want to share with others who have need.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you very much, Dr. Smith. Now, here is Mrs. Arthur Berg, the wife of my old friend, the composer and director, Dr. Arthur Berg. Mrs. Berg, I believe you have a question here. It looks like you've got it written out. Is that right?

*Mrs. Berg:* Dr. Browne and Dr. Shapley. Ever since the twelfth century, each succeeding century has contributed outstanding figures in the fields of art, music, and literature. Can you point to any twentieth century giants in these fields?

*Dr. Browne:* Well, Mrs. Berg, you should know the answer in certain of these fields, at least. In the twentieth century, so far as science is concerned, we have Einstein. In psychology, we have Freud. In literature and drama, we have Bernard Shaw. Bernard Shaw may very well be thought of in the future as comparable to Voltaire, if only because he has

outlived Voltaire in years. We have H. G. Wells. We have now Thomas Mann. Among composers we've had Gustav Mahler and so many more that you would know. Among sculptors we have Rodin. Oh, one could go through a long list.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Dr. Browne. Now, here's a question from my old friend, George Reed, an associate of Dr. Browne.

*Mr. Reed:* Dr. Smith. If our subject means, "Has man's treatment of man improved?" then isn't it true that only eighty years ago we had slavery, we had child labor, we had man-killing working conditions, and we exploited labor, and that today we are much more really our brother's keeper?

*Dr. Smith:* I would say that there have been certain advances politically and in a wider concern for our fellowmen, but I do believe that we are still lagging so far behind that our future is imperiled.

*Mr. Denny:* Now a question for Dr. Shapley.

*Man:* My name is R. Raymond Kay from Los Angeles. From your remarks, you place great hope on more and better education, for which I think you will agree that without a free and inquiring mind, we cannot have better education. What chance is there for a free and inquiring mind today when totalitarian

forces are still so strong in civilization today?

*Mr. Denny:* Dr. Shapley?

*Dr. Shapley:* There are count where a person has complete freedom in his thought as yet, spite of various purge commit and various reactionary tendency. I don't believe we're seriously handicapped from doing so real thinking or haven't real freedom. I believe that we will be able to educate ourselves, especially if we realize that we're doing it in a different medium than in what we worked some time ago. That we have now to realize that we have some handicaps, like world wide thoughts that get in our ways, not leaving us with our own thinking. Oh, I think there's great hope for it if we just keep trying.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you very much, Dr. Shapley. Now, will our speakers prepare their summaries of tonight's question, he has a message of interest to you.

*Announcer:* In 1933, when late President Roosevelt first took office in the depths of the last depression, he told the American people that the only thing they have to fear is fear itself. It was the kind of statement that was needed at that particular time. The American people felt a sense of great relief by this simple statement from the new president of the United States.

Today the ugly cloak of fear



war is spreading around the world. How can we break through it this time to the sunlight of peace and security? Your Town Meeting believes that we have this power within ourselves; hence, week by week we bring you discussions of fundamental questions, that concern your future welfare, in order to help you find the right answers to your problems. Tonight, we have drawn your attention to the basic problem of our times.

In future weeks, as in the past, we will continue to bring you both sides of timely, controversial issues with the best speakers we can secure. And your suggestions will always be welcome. And now, we return you to Mr. Denny.

*Mr. Denny:* And now, Lewis Browne, what's your final word on tonight's question?

*Dr. Browne:* So far as I can see, Lin Yutang and Herbert Smith are quite convinced that the glass we're drinking out of is half empty. Whereas, Harlow Shapley and myself are rejoicing because the glass is half full. This is the difference always between the pessimist and the optimist. They're complaining because the world isn't better; we are rejoicing that it's so much better than it used to be.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Dr. Browne. Now, Dr. J. Herbert Smith, your final word, please.

*Dr. Smith:* I'm glad that Dr. Browne feels that we're so near to-

gether, and I think we are; but I, as a Christian minister, find that people who are in some kind of need and know it can be helped. The thing that appalls me is that there are so many people in the world who don't seem to realize that we're in danger and that there is a need. When I see more people awakening to a realization of this need, then I'll be happier and surer that we are blessed in our twentieth century civilization.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Dr. J. Herbert Smith. Now, a final word from Dr. Harlow Shapley, of Harvard University. Dr. Shapley.

*Dr. Shapley:* Do you know what I should like to do with our present civilization and its scientific and cultural powers? I would like to make living in this exciting world of knowledge and experience so irresistibly attractive for everybody that no sane person would want to spoil it, and we could lock up the lunatics. In other words, I would like to lure man into decency, not through some big sense of duty, but through direct and tangible personal rewards that would satisfy the natural cravings of his body, and his heart, and his mind.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Dr. Shapley. And now, a final word from Dr. Lin Yutang.

*Dr. Lin:* I think we are all agreed this evening that the possibilities of increasing human happiness and better living—



thanks to science and all its discoveries—are enormous, even spiritually, I think; and in our social conscience, we have improved. Now all those benefits are important, if we can eliminate war. But we all agree that this is a very, very big and immediate “if”. War would nullify all benefits of science unless we can learn to live in peace.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Dr. Lin Yutang, Harlow Shapley, Reverend J. Herbert Smith, and Lewis Browne for your counsel on this very fundamental question in which we are all deeply interested. Thanks, also, to the American Airlines for the use of this extremely comfortable DC-6. If you, our listeners, have enjoyed this program, remember it has come about through the co-operative efforts of a great many people, particularly the marvelous engineering staff of the American Broadcasting Company.

I'm sure you'll agree that we must find ways to use these instruments of modern science as constructively as we've tried to use them here tonight. It's not an easy task, but your Town Meeting is doing its utmost to help you find the right answers. For instance, next week, in Denver, Colorado, where we are to

be the guest of the Denver *Post*, we turn to a highly controversial question which continues to absorb the interest of the people of this country, “Will the Taft-Hartley Law Improve Labor Relations in Industry?”

Our speakers will be Senator Joseph H. Ball, Republican, Minnesota; Harold F. Silver, President of the Silver Engineering Works, Inc., in Denver; Gerhart Van Arkel, former General Counsel of the National Labor Relations Board; and a fourth speaker to be announced.

The following week in Salt Lake City our subject will be, “Is Universal Military Training Necessary for Our Security?”

Our speakers will be Brigadier General John M. Devine, Commandant of the Universal Military Training Center at Ft. Knoxsburg; Senator J. W. Fulbright, Democrat, of Arkansas; Mr. Norman Thomas, one of our Town Meeting trustees and chairman of the Postwar World Council; and Leonard Erickson, former member of the Supreme Court of Montana.

And please remember your Town Meeting is on the air 52 weeks each year, so plan to be with us next week and every week at the sound of the clarion bell.